



Complete the Holidays with Cranberries

Many holiday meals would not be complete without cranberries. Americans consume about 400 million pounds of this sweet and sour berry every year. It's a colorful and festive berry. And it's one of only a few fruits native to North America. Better than that, it's good for you.

Cranberries are among the top 10 best sources of antioxidants. These nutrients help prevent damage to blood vessels that can cause a heart attack.

Other Health Benefits of Cranberries

- Eating cranberries may help prevent a urinary tract infection (UTIs). That's

because components in the cranberries stop bacteria, such as E. coli, from clinging to the cells along the walls of the urinary tract. (Most likely, though, cranberries can't treat a UTI once you have one.)

- Cranberries can make it hard for bacteria in the stomach to cause ulcers.
- Studies show that cranberries may lower the risk for some types of cancer.

- The fiber in the skins and flesh of cranberries supports bowel health. This fiber can also improve your cholesterol levels.
- Fresh cranberries provide the most health benefits. Enjoy them in low-sugar juices, sauces, and healthy breads and muffins.

Try these cranberry recipes
<http://tinyurl.com/az686dg>

American Heart Association. 2012. The American Journal of Medicine. Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine. NIH.



Alcohol Use – Consider the Risks

can lead to liver damage, heart disease, pancreatic problems, and cancer.

- Alcohol abuse is linked to higher rates of divorce, depression, suicide, domestic violence, unemployment, and poverty.
- Even moderate alcohol use can cause weight gain, acne, sleep apnea, tooth problems, breast cancer, stomach ulcers, high blood pressure, and fetal alcohol syndrome (if you drink while pregnant).

Be Active to Avoid Weight Gain

The new restaurant buffet at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada, was inspired by over-the-top indulgence. It includes some healthy options, but most diners are dazzled by the 524 items on the all-you-can-eat menu. Few walk away without loosening their belt. And that's a problem if you're trying to watch your weight.

People overeat for a lot of reasons. And it's easy to do at a buffet or during the holidays. Many people gain weight during the holidays from eating too much and being less active.

In a recent study, researchers followed 195 people for one year. The diverse group ranged in age from 19 to 82 years old, and in weight from 95 to 306 pounds. Each person weighed in every six weeks before, during, and after the holidays. And researchers tracked their eating habits and activity level.

They found that 165 people in the study gained one to three pounds during the holidays because they ate more and were less active. And they did not lose the weight after the holidays were over.

- Every 48 minutes, a person dies in a car wreck where alcohol was a factor.
- In one minute, alcohol can reach your brain. Just a few drinks can slow coordination, memory, and judgment.
- Technically, alcohol is a poison. It is rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream. And it



*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Journal of the American Medical Association.
World Health Organization.*

Try hot mulled cider for a holiday treat.

Continued on page 2

Take a Look in the Toy Box

Toys can be great gifts and provide hours of fun for a kid. But every year, millions of toys are recalled for having lead paint, tiny magnets, or a hazardous design.

And every year, doctors treat more than 185,000 kids for injuries caused by toys such as cuts, bruises, broken bones, burns, poisoning, choking, and worse.

You can prevent toy-related injuries by following a few basic guidelines.

- If a toy is recalled, follow the instructions to repair it or dispose of it.

- Only buy age-appropriate toys, as indicated by safety labels.
- Check toys for broken parts or potential hazards. Repair damaged toys, or throw them away.
- Keep toys with long strings, straps, cords, ribbons, and loops away from small children.
- Supervise the use of electrical toys to prevent burns or electrical shock.

Check the website www.cpsc.gov for toy recalls.

- Use mylar balloons, instead of latex balloons to limit choking hazards.

If you give your child a toy, play together. Or take the time to watch your child play with the toy. It will give you a chance to inspect the toy as well as enjoy time together.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Safe Kids Worldwide



Be Active to Avoid Weight Gain

(continued from page 1)

Being overweight or obese is a risk factor for heart disease, diabetes, and other serious health problems.

But it's not all bad news. You can still enjoy food during the holidays in moderation. And it's OK to sample dessert. Just make time for regular exercise. Take a walk after dinner. Park far away when you go shopping. Go to the gym. Or get an early start on your New Year's resolution to be more active.

National Institutes of Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Task Force
on the Prevention and Treatment of Obesity

30 ways to be more active
<http://tinyurl.com/4bcu25s>



Walk to Prevent Stroke



When 42-year-old Wisconsin resident Tracy Nelson woke up one morning, her arm was limp. She thought it was probably caused by the way she slept for the night. But it wasn't. A few minutes later, she collapsed. She crawled to the phone to call for

help. And when a 911 operator answered, she couldn't speak. Tracy was having a stroke.

A stroke occurs when a clot blocks blood supply to the brain, or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. And it can happen to anyone. Every 40 seconds, someone in the United States has a stroke. And within minutes, a stroke can cause serious physical and mental problems. But new research suggests that regular walking can greatly reduce your risk for a stroke.

In the study, researchers followed 39,315 women for about 12 years and tracked their level of physical activity. Researchers found that those who walked at a brisk pace for two or more hours a week lowered their stroke risk by

Stroke:
Know the Signs.
Act in Time.
stroke.nih.gov

37 percent. Those who walked a little slower for two or more hours a week still reduced their risk by 30 percent. If you want to lower your risk for a stroke, take a walk. Fortunately, Tracy was able to walk again in less than a year. She made a full recovery, then helped organize the *Folks Against Strokes Fun Run and Walk* to help educate people about the warning signs of stroke and raise money for stroke research.

Stroke: *Journal of the American Heart Association*
National Institutes of Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Folks Against Stroke

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

Q: Can chocolate be part of a healthy diet?

A: Go to www.wellsource.info/wn/ask-chocolate.pdf to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: evan@wellsource.com
subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor.
Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Drive Safely" available at: www.wellsource.info/wn/hc-drive-safely.pdf
Practice safe driving habits.